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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/581,750	04/16/2007	Hans-Ulrich Hoppe	WEICKM-0056	8492

7590 11/24/2009
Millen, White, Zelano & Branigan
Arlington Courthouse Plaza 1
2200 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1400
Arlington, VA 22201

EXAMINER

BLAND, LAYLA D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1623

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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11/24/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/581,750

Applicant(s)

HOPPE ET AL.

Examiner

LAYLA BLAND

Art Unit

1623

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 6/6/2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 4-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/ICE)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/6/2006.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

This application is a national stage entry of International Application No. PCT/EP04/13904, filed December 7, 2004, which claims priority to German Application No. 103-57-260.0, filed on December 8, 2003. The certified copy of the priority has been filed with the instant Application. It is noted that German Application No. 103-57-260.0 is in German; no translation of said German application into English has been provided.

Claims 1-12 are pending and are examined on the merits herein.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

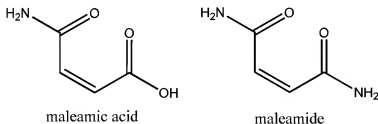
The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 4-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

A broad range or limitation together with a narrow range or limitation that falls within the broad range or limitation (in the same claim) is considered indefinite, since the resulting claim does not clearly set forth the metes and bounds of the patent protection desired. See MPEP § 2173.05(c). Note the explanation given by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences in *Ex parte Wu*, 10 USPQ2d 2031, 2033 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1989), as to where broad language is followed by "such as" and then narrow language. The Board stated that this can render a claim indefinite by raising a

question or doubt as to whether the feature introduced by such language is (a) merely exemplary of the remainder of the claim, and therefore not required, or (b) a required feature of the claims. Note also, for example, the decisions of *Ex parte Steigewald*, 131 USPQ 74 (Bd. App. 1961); *Ex parte Hall*, 83 USPQ 38 (Bd. App. 1948); and *Ex parte Hasche*, 86 USPQ 481 (Bd. App. 1949). In the present instance, claim 4 recites the broad recitation of xyloglucan, etc., and the claim also recites "in particular, guar gum" etc., which is the narrower statement of the range/limitation. Likewise, claim 9 requires precipitation, and recites the limitation "preferably" using a mineral acid.

Claim 5 recites a process wherein a maleamic acid is reacted with a polysaccharide and also recites "the carboxylic acid function of the maleamide component." This is unclear because maleamic acid is not the same as maleamide, and maleamide does not contain a carboxylic acid function. It is unclear whether additional transformations are required to convert the maleamic acid to a "maleamide component." The examiner understands the structures of maleamic acid and maleamide to be as shown below.



Thus, it is not clear whether the "maleamide component" refers to the maleamic acid mentioned previously in the claim or if an additional transformation is required.

Claims 6-8 also recite the "maleamide component" or "the N-alkylmaleamide" and are indefinite for the same reason as mentioned above for claim 5.

Claim 6 depends from claim 5 and recites the limitation "the N-alkylmaleamide has been obtained" from a fatty acid amine and maleic anhydride. Claim 7 recites that "the maleamide component has been cyclized." Because of the use of past tense in claims 6-7, it is unclear whether claims 6-7 require an active method step, or whether they are only intended to limit the structure or origin of the starting materials.

Claims 10-12 provide for the use of the polysaccharide derivative of claim 1, but, since the claim does not set forth any steps involved in the method/process, it is unclear what method/process applicant is intending to encompass. A claim is indefinite where it merely recites a use without any active, positive steps delimiting how this use is actually practiced.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 10-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed recitation of a use, without setting forth any steps involved in the process, results in an improper definition of a process, i.e., results in a claim which is not a proper process claim under 35 U.S.C. 101. See for example *Ex parte Dunki*, 153 USPQ 678 (Bd.App. 1967) and *Clinical Products, Ltd. v. Brenner*, 255 F. Supp. 131, 149 USPQ 475 (D.D.C. 1966).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-3 are allowed. The derivatives of claims 1-3 are not taught or fairly suggested by the art of record. The closest prior art is seen to be Pickard et al. (US 3,993,640, November 23, 1976). Pickard teaches treatment of cellulose with an N-acyl cyclic imide but is silent regarding the structure of the resulting product. However, a central feature of Pickard's invention is N-acyl substitution on the cyclic imide, which is not encompassed by the instant claims. The art of record does not suggest replacement of Pickard's N-acyl group with the claimed N-alkyl. Furthermore, Pickard specifically claims the use of cyclic imides "free of ethylinic unsaturation conjugated to each carbonyl group in the primary imide ring," in contrast to the instant compounds which are prepared via reaction with unsaturated compounds (maleamic acid, maleamide, or maleimide). Thus, it is considered unlikely that Pickard's compounds have the same structure as the instant compounds because the starting materials used to prepare them are different and would be expected to react differently.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LAYLA BLAND whose telephone number is (571)272-9572. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 7:00 - 3:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anna Jiang can be reached on (571) 272-0627. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Layla Bland/
Examiner, Art Unit 1623